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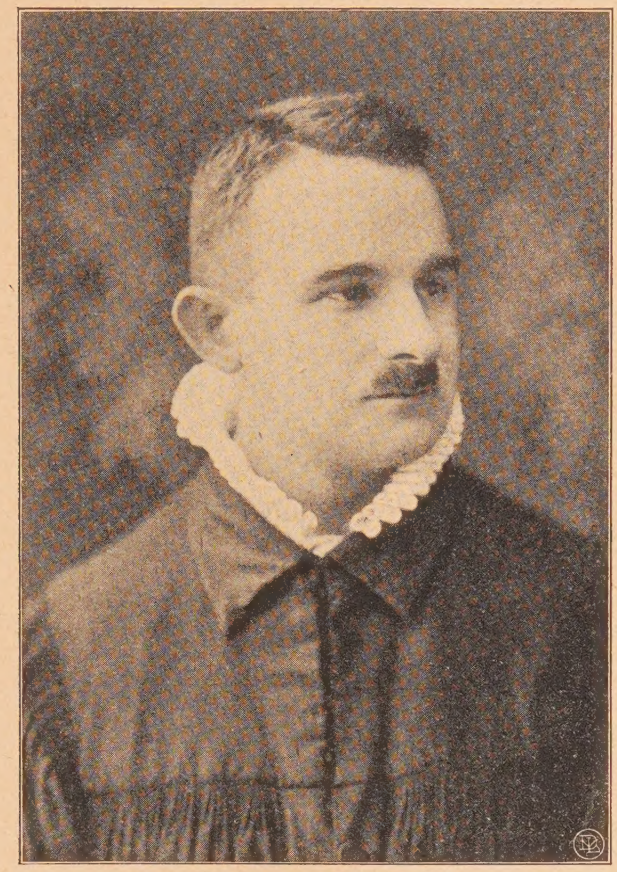
# The Eucken Review

(Organ of the Eucken Society)

No. 4/5 APRIL/MAY 1923



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# THE EUCKEN REVIEW

(Organ of the Eucken Society)

No. 4/5 APRIL/MAY 1923

## The Spiritual Crisis of Today.

Lecture delivered at the Annual Meeting of the Eucken Society, Oct. 6th. 1922.

By

RUDOLF EUCKEN.

MANKIND today lacks peace and happiness. This is especially the case with Germany, which is crushed down by fate and guilt. Without need it has forsaken a deeprooted tradition. It has, by this, frequently impaired all its ethical forces and standards, even those of faith and integrity. This has divided the nation into hostile sections, which often lose all mutual understanding. As a further misfortune we must add the crushing economic distress, which increases day by day and sweeps over the country like an irresistible flood. But leaving aside the one particular nation, we may safely assert that mankind as a whole is not conscious of much happiness. There is much rush and hurry, much strife and anxiety, but no fixed aim that raises work to joyous activity. There is an overwhelming abundance of movement, but no inner cohesion. Under the semblance of ideal aims materialism and egotism rule unchecked. We have many isolated instances of excellence and nobleness, of courage and self-denial, but there is no united harmony of aspiration, no energetic spiritual advance, only faint-hearted faltering on every side. The ideals that once inspired us have faded and decayed. The gods we once worshipped are dethroned and have become mere idols.

How could this happen, and what can now be done to prevent further development along these lines? The entanglement is apparently not confined to our opinions and moods, but it undermines the foundations of our life. Spiritual forces struggle against one another, and thus disorganise our existence.

Human endeavour seems to be directed more and more to the world of the senses. Some decades ago the distinguished American philosopher William James already said: "For the last 150 years the progress of science seems to have meant nothing but a constant rise in the material world and a constant decline in the significance of man."

This applies not only to science, but to our whole life, which has turned more and more from the spiritual to the material, and which is now directed to this sphere. There is no lack of brave reactions, but the chief trend is in the other direction. One special circumstance has rendered acute this movement towards worldly and material things. It is the change in human labour which brought about unexpected results and which finally endangers all individual life. This course of events has made a fiendish oppressor of mankind out of a power which had promised to become a source of blessing. Work has assumed a tyrannical character, which oppresses the soul. The latter is still too weak to overcome the obstruction and to fulfil its own mission. The centre of gravity has been displaced by a curious subversion. What was formerly of paramount importance has now sunk to insignificance, and what used to be merely accessory has now usurped the mastery. From this a crisis results which sets aside every other question and exposes man to disintegrating doubt. Let us first make it the subject of unprejudiced reflexion, and then see how we may overcome the difficulties of the situation and restore the disturbed equilibrium.

### a) THE GROWTH OF THE PROBLEM.

In former times work was closely connected with the personality of the worker. The soul and the soul's delight were inherent in the work itself. The direction towards the object intensified the aspirations. From an occasional occupation, work became a profession, which filled life and ennobled it. But in the course of modern times, under the leadership of natural science, work has assumed a technical mechanical character and has enrolled the forces of nature in the service of man. These forces gave him an enormous power. They extended his existence to infinite limits. In self-poised supremacy he holds his own against his environment. The co-operation of intelligence and skill conquers every distance of space and time. It draws men closer together and unites them in an infinite variety of relations. It has dispersed much grief and given much joy to life. In clear-sighted strenght

man rules over the material world. But at the same time the inner character of work has changed. Work emancipated itself from man and went its own way. It engendered ever more extensive complexes, which grew more and more into independant forces, while carrying out their own laws. The mediation of man was indeed necessary, but he was only a helpful servant. However much he might externally feel himself to be the master, he yet became more and more subject to a natural process. Thus arose a movement which produced ever graver consequences. To the change from manual to mechanical work modern industry owes its existence. Its increase produced an accumulation in some special ways and a concentration making for vast and incontrollable masses. If thereby the individual worker at first seemed to be powerless when pitted against the machine, he soon developed self-consciousness in the aggregate, and compelling demands were set forth for the moulding of social life. Especially momentous was the disjunction of the two great factors of industrial life, the employer and the employee, which soon formed a violent antithesis. It was obvious that those who were economically dependent should take refuge in the conception of an entity, and should therefrom expect improved conditions. In reality the predominance of numbers has given a continually increasing political power to the working classes; but they only gain it as component units of such numbers, and the individual remains dependent on the mass movements and on party leaders. A strong despotism here rules under the guise of liberty. Moreover the aggregate desire for power is distincty hazy. The whole is extolled as an exalting power; in reality, however, no entity can be attained on this basis, but only an accumulation of individuals, a soulless juxtaposition, no internal unity. Finally everything depends on the individuals, and their opinion will be the standard of good and evil, right and wrong. All spontaneous spiritual life is relinquished. The individual comes under the overwhelming influence of the party. Party aims decide the fundamental questions of human life; party policy subjugates truth. Personality loses ground in proportion as life takes its stamp from the masses.

On the other side we have industry with its control of labour. Here we must clearly distinguish between the objective and the subjective elements. The importance of the work achieved cannot be doubted. But it is different with regard to man. The civilisation resulting from work sinks to the level of a merely human civilisation; it tends to subordinate all other tasks to economic requirements, and thus to vitiate all ideals. Personal interests are identified with material achievement and encourage many delusions. No personal idealism of the leaders of industry can hinder the decline to materialism and littleness. Of especial gravity is here the immensely increased power of money, without which industry cannot carry out its designs. This engenders the despotism of money—a plutocracy—the unworthiest of all governments. It penetrates the life of the community by thousands of channels, and sacrifices all other contents of life to its own self-seeking purposes. This development is not a direct product of industry, but as a rule follows it closely and brings forth a special type of life which mankind cannot permanently endure.

Finally we are confronted with the question whether industry serves the welfare of humanity, or whether we must admit that it is an end in itself. Beyond doubt this answer would finally make man the mere medium of a soulless process of civilisation. Care for the conditions and means of life would supplant care for life itself. A glance at the actual state of things reveals in tragic intensity the complete reversal of man's intentions, which has turned his great hopes into bitter disappointments. He had hoped to become greater and happier by the technical development of work and the extension of industry. He has gained superficially, but has lost at the core, for he lacks inner stability and cannot but doubt the meaning and value of all this rush and unrest.

Must we suffer this result of the immense contest as an inevitable fate, or are we strong enough to take up the struggle against it? This struggle will not be an easy one, since the complication is not man's fault but results from the appearance of new forces of life. Only the manifestation and operation of new forces of life can give us any hope for a satisfactory solution, and not theories worked out by learned men. The question touches the whole, and only the whole can promote our progress. Certainly much can be done to remove the evils of labour on a large scale without a fundamental change. We fully acknowledge the efforts of modern social and political institutions to appreciate more the spiritual influence of that work on man's physical and moral status and to deduce certain demands therefrom: surely many an evil can be remedied. Let us, for instance, demand that no woman, especially no married woman, should perform any factory work. The consequent injury to family life far outweighs all other considerations. Of what avail is any economic advantage, if it undermines the foundations of society, disintegrating mankind into a conglomeration of single individuals?

A more searching question is this: How far is modern industry of real value to the whole of our life? Does

it mean improvement or deterioration for our whole existence and for our soul? For a solution of this question, an ethical appreciation and control of industry is necessary. It need not degenerate into moralising restrictions, for we do not conceive morality to be a straitlaced coercion of man by means of pedantic measures, but rather an enhancement of life to the height of its spiritual task. There are many industrial concerns which inordinately claim the strength, time, and interest of men, without serving any valuable or even useful end. Boundless human greed of gain brings on the market many superfluous and even undesirable articles, which only pander to vanity, thirst for pleasure, and sensuality; much activity is wasted on trivial objects. A cleansing and sifting, as well as a separation of the essential from the superfluous, are here necessary. Difficult as it may be to pass sentence in the case, we must yet face the question. We should not waste human forces blindly and senselessly as long as there are so many important things to be done.

The question also of a limiting of the number of workers should not be rejected out of hand. Economic reasons do indeed make the largest possible extension of a concern desirable in order to reduce expenses. But before the economic interest must be placed the ethical interest, that is to say, the welfare of the whole man and of the whole of human society. On this principle all boundless conglomeration must be opposed. For it threatens serious injury to life in the community. On the one hand there is here an excess, on the other a vacuum. The result is in both cases an unhealthy, unnatural mode of life. We cannot acknowledge a fundamental right of the factory owner to take into his employment an unlimited number of workmen and mould them to his own purposes. Such a fatal accumulation uproots man; it robs him of home and the love of it, as well as of his inner connection with his people and his country. It means for him a spiritual impoverishment and blankness. It represses all that is individual and personal. In these conditions man cannot possibly feel happy or develop his spiritual faculties.

These questions and objections must stand out all the more prominently, because the wholesale industries exceed the superior and more refined industries, so that we should promote the latter as much as possible. The ethical control and superintendence are a colossal task for statecraft. Whole decades have regarded the economic movements as a mere natural process, have culpably neglected the ethical values, and have renounced all obstacles and perils in favour of a supposed freedom and increase of strength.

Nevertheless the positive achievements of industry must be fully acknowledged. It has given to the spiritual much more power over nature, and has in certain directions considerably raised the standard of life. But the improvement is restricted to the means and conditions of our existence. It would be entirely wrong to make this care the chief consideration, and to alienate life from its inner destination. What that means and in what errors it entangles the life of the community has been impressively proved by the world war. That war would hardly have broken out, hat not English industry watched with great anxiety the incessant advance of German industry; and the ultimate results of the war would have been completely different, had not American industry and finance driven American people into the world war by such questionable means as falsehood, deception and intimidation. Thus, owing to this materialisation of life, the most objectionable interests of certain groups of men play the decisive part. It could not be more clearly proved that the history of mankind is not ruled by reason. If we turn to the causes of this unfortunate entanglement, we cannot but acknowledge the strong participation of an unlimited industry. Here the average man is led into temptations to which he succombs. He who concedes this cannot but admit that the task of an ethical limitation and control of economic life and industry is the business of the whole of mankind, and that here the different nations must act together, supported by the fundamental conviction and energetic will of all concerned. Internationalism must be decidedly rejected, since it would transform the individual life of the nations into a formless jumble, and would deprive them of their own national character. Yet a supernational will is indispensable to such ethical direction. Proper means and ways will surely be found, once the pressure of necessity has proved the urgency of this fundamental idea. We cannot deny the fact that today the whole social life of humanity is going through a serious crisis. The social policy hitherto followed proves more and more insufficient. Socialism and communism do indeed perceive here a great problem. But they treat it too summarily. They think it possible to solve the question by external means and regulations. They undervalue the fundamental right of the free and spontaneous spiritual being. At the same time they are incapable not merely of giving life an accumulation, but a real entity and thereby also a high aim. Only a reorganisation thus remains possible. We cannot advance in the main direction until mankind knows by personal experience how inefficient and even intolerable are a mere culture of work and an unlimited industry—and

until not only the individual, but the whole community is seized by a genuine desire for the salvation of the soul. The possibilities and the demands accruing herefrom can only be recognised by reverting to the fundamental structure of human life and human experience. From this point alone can we seek to overcome the antithesis between soul and work and to prepare a way for inner unity. Let us first see whether the conditions of our life make that possible, and what decisions and tasks devolve from these very conditions.

### b) THE SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM.

The immediate aspect of today shows great confusion. Radically different answers intersect each other. The chief questions stagger between an absolute affirmation and an absolute negation. Our time treats nature as the foundation of reality, but it rejects an open avowal of materialism and is loud in its praise of idealism. Its chief care is for the things of this world, yet it shrinks from giving up religion. It seeks refuge in the sustaining power of tradition. Yet its faith in tradition is shaken, and it is incertain what the main drift of tradition really is. We must above all strive to overcome such confusion of ideas. Life needs distinct and strong fundamental principles. It is not sufficient to discover such fundamental principles; we must transform them into vital movements and individual actions. Only such a personal appropriation of general principles can arrest the threatening degeneration. It is necessary to penetrate to the fundamental facts and to entrench ourselves in fundamental convictions, the affirmation of which determines the significance and success of life.

The human soul has different stages, which either complete or oppose each other. Human life must not lose sight of physical nature. This and the immeasurable tissue of cohesions of the elements form the points of departure. Daily, hourly are we reminded of this interdependence. If in former times this stage was often underrated, it is now generally overestimated and often subjects even the spiritual to the conceptions and standards of material existence. We, on the contrary, imperatively demand a clear distinction between a mere continuation in the human soul of the methods of nature and that which is introduced by a power superior to nature: this power we term the spiritual power. A considerable part of the human soul is likewise subjected to natural conditions and impulses. But as an antithesis to such obstructions arises a sphere of spontaneous activity and inner values. If at first this turning point develops a few single features and gains but a few individuals, the course of the movement effects a union of the different parts into one whole. There is an aspiration towards a community of life and a world of spiritual cohesions. In the same measure as we succeed herein does natural self-preservation yield to the formation of individual forces and aims. The centre of life is transferred to the supersensuous. This new life structure does not merely string together given conditions like nature does, but brings about a momentous separation of the elements themselves. Condition and matter, subject and object separate; the overcoming of the antithesis produces a comprehensive and enhancing energy. Selfpoised life is the result. The mere accumulation of the elements is overcome by the formation of a unity and by the movement towards a community. Reality, till then soulless, obtains a soul. Above the sphere of natural relations arises a sphere of higher contents and values. At the same time it becomes possible for the different points to cohere and form a whole to which they subordinate themselves. The whole can also be appropriated by those parts; the mere natural element becomes a vital energy, a monad, a personality. The result is a new and supersensuous life. This fundamental change cannot be the unaided work of man. It must owe its being to the depths of cosmic life, of which it at the same time constitutes a new stage. Therefore we must acknowledge in the spiritually exalted man a cosmic being whose spiritual life far surpasses the standards of purely human society.

But this change confronts man with a difficult problem. The regeneration cannot be effectuated without our acknowledgement and appropriation. It is often — not to say generally — denied. The enhancement remains a mere prospect; it does not find the way from the design to the realisation. Such half measures are especially characteristic of our time, which trusts too much to a vague, unsubstantial, purely imaginary spirituality. We on the other hand demand a firm and valiant adherence to a substantial, not merely subjective spirituality. We demand also an independent world of the spirit. We advocate the cosmic character of man's spiritual being and an inner cohesion with the universe. Hence only can spiritual activity result, as it is manifested by the formation of special spheres of life, such as art and science, the state and law. But this leading fact must be grasped by man's consciousness and assimilated by his own volition, so as to become his own absolutely, and to make for cohesion and enhancement. Let there here be none of the usual halfheartedness and indecision. At this point men's minds must decide and diverge with uncompromising precision. Fundamental spirituality must not be frittered

away by a series of separate achievements, but must be concentrated on the enhancement and attainment of the one indispensable claim. We thus come to the first decisive point, which forms the premises to all further development.

The decision which results depends on the judgment of the spiritual and especially of the moral standard of man. We reject all weakening and passing over of the violent antithesis that permeates man's life and degrades it to a false semblance. A great gulf is unmistakably fixed between his spiritual nature and real conduct.

There are spiritual possibilities in him, but these possibilities are not realised, so they are subjected both by the senses and by petty and selfish human motives. The forces detach themselves from their original basis and go their own ways, which are often in direct contradiction to their spiritual mission and terribly distort their aspirations. We can even not deny the existence of evil,—of a radical evil power. The conception of original sin may be unfortunate, but we dare not blind ourselves to the fact of a schism in the inner depth of life. Later on we shall see the consequences of this fact and how we are to deal with it. First of all we have to acknowledge the fact, and to reject an obscuration of it which inevitably engenders superficiality, even falsehood. We thus resist the tendency of our time to attribute all the evils of existence to special political and social institutions, but to treat man as a noble and intelligent being; or at least a docile and tractable one. Those institutions are certainly justified, but they can be moulded in various ways. Their efficacy depends primarily on whether they penetrate to the bedrock of existence or whether they only skim on the surface. In reality we cannot here build up from the outside to the inside.

We must therefore show to our superficial time the fact of a deep spiritual and especially moral antithesis in the very essence of man. We must reject all delusive aids. We must not waste force and conviction on isolated things. We must venture on a struggle from the whole to the whole. He who sees no problem here, can find no solution. We may apply to ourselves the old saying that our time can endure neither the evil nor the remedy. Our time lacks neither conflict nor honest endeavour, but in these inner questions the struggle mostly misses its aim.

But we are placed in a very difficult position. On the one hand our human sphere does not manifest merely an accumulation of isolated spiritual phenomena, but a spiritual entity. On the other hand we feel our incapacity to appropriate the inevitable demand. This antithesis is all the more tragic because nature also seems to treat human welfare with complete indifference and the forms of nature—in the guise of space, time, isolation—control the spiritual as well as the visible life. Consequently we appear to be forsaken and lost in the universe.

But how do we stand with regard to the revelation of a spiritual world? It adverts to superior cosmic power in the past. The communication of this power, on which depends all that gives significance and value to our life, cannot possibly be a delusion. On the other hand, how then is it conceivable that in our sphere the spiritual remains so weak and discordant? Cosmic development seems to reach a certain height and then to lose the footing thus gained. It seems unable to carry out its own aims.

In this way we become the victims of doubt, which necessarily disintegrates our life far beyond all theory and robs us of all our joy in existence. Evidently there remains but one alternative: either the whole world of the spiritual movement to which man is accessible is but a cosmic error, and so all hopes and achievements of mankind are mere delusions, or else there exists an active power, which frees us from all entanglements and raises life above all obstructions. Such a demand is placed before us by religion, which as far as it obtains authority over us seems at once to emphasise and to solve the problem—to emphasise it by clearly presenting the intolerable antithesis,—to solve it by raising man and even the whole universe to a new plane by means of its creative power. Religion seeks and at the same time finds. It cannot come to us with visible signs and wonders. It demands a miracle of the spirit, a further revelation of life, the manifestation of new depths. Only such a religion can reconcile the antagonistic elements in our own being, can fully realise the hitherto vague possibilities, can create for human endeavour a vital and adequate support. The spiritual expression of this change is faith—faith not in special theories or dogmas, but faith in life itself, and the spontaneous certainty of an effectual enhancement of our being. This faith can only become manifest by its own power of transforming and regenerating. It forms a fundamental experience, a fact, which can only be lived, not deduced. This enhancement of life is derived from the conviction that the cosmic life communicates itself to mankind and to the individual, enriching them with its own affluence. This means redemption from all tribulation. It brings about an immediate connection between man and the deity. This result is a pristine source of spirituality. The climax of this movement is reached by the Christian con-

viction that the superior power of love not only participates in all these antitheses, but itself takes up the struggle against a cosmic breakdown and appeals to man to share in this struggle and thereby save his soul. Obstructions and entanglements by no means vanish from our spere because spirituality triumphs and man is conveyed to the creative depths of existence. But life acquires a superiority towards them, a depth and power which enable it to defy all such lets and hindrances. A hard struggle remains, but it is a struggle relieved by the certainty of final victory.

This change secures for us not only special further developments, but a renewal of our whole life, and above all a purely inner world. Without the latter, all inner values retain natural and merely human elements. The inner world becomes manifest in an ideal personal life, and in a supernational community as embodied by the church. This life must oppose a new order to the natural vital forms—space, time, isolation—, which have hitherto fettered life and could only be approached by men with the aid of images and parables, though possessing a solid foundation and an adequate power of persuasion in the realm of active spirituality. Here it is life which leads thought. These cohesions suffer no doubt that the conquering life must be superior to the universe and must also permeate it. From this standpoint we must examine experience, and especially that form of civilisation which is determined by labour. We can here find courage and strength to distinguish right and wrong, gain and loss in this form of civilisation. All these elements must unite with human endeavour to form the third final decision. So an ethical-religious idealism grows up. It is ethical inasmuch as it transforms life into a free act and independent ascent. It is religious inasmuch as it sees in all special achievements the working of a creative cosmic will and of an all-pervading love. Here freedom and grace form an inseparable unity. The working of this ethical-religious unity of life is not a process confined to a special time; it is common to all times, and gives to each of them its specific character.

The life which here presents itself is distinctly dramatic. It is full of movement and stimulation. Amidst struggles and negation it attains an affirmation, but an affirmation superior to all natural instincts. Human life here manifests itself as a succession of decisive steps. The fundamental and preliminary spirituality is followed by a stage of militant spirituality struggling against itself and the world. Then comes the stage of triumphant spirituality, which completes this evolution. In our life, conflict predominates; but beyond the conflict a conquering, indwelling spirituality awaits us, which lets man participate in the victory and the deep innermost peace.

Courage and faith are the chief vehicles of this form of life. They are strong enough to keep off the deplorable faint-heartedness and slackness of the present time, which today often assail even literature. We trust in the exalting power of the spiritual being, as far as it is founded on the creative cosmic will.

Here man is not a worthless fragment in a senseless world. His connection with a spiritual world gives him an implicit value as a participant in the great struggle and as a member of the eternal order. The struggle is not only a warding off and a preservation of existing conditions, but an inauguration of new depths and tasks. We therefore need not doubt the significance and value of our life, however dark the world situation may be. If those fundamental convictions are firmly established in us, we retain indomitable courage in the midst of trouble and distress, and joyful certainty in the midst of doubt. What we have seen before is evident throughout: the final issue is not dependent on human opinions and moods, but on the strength and nature of the spiritual forces which guide our life.

From the standpoint of this superhistorical conviction, we must openly criticise the achievements of a particular period. We must do so especially with regard to our own chaotic age. Civilisation and religion are in modern times frequently disintegrated, to the injury of the whole of life. In spite of great material achievements, civilisation has become merely wordly. Its chief aim is the development and enhancement of strength. It threatens to degenerate into either naturalism or intellectualism. We on the other hand demand a deepening in the direction of essential spiritual life, and thence the evolution of a distinct affirmative or negative attitude with regard to all the main problems. As to religion, it suffers from a deplorable schism between an older and a newer form. The former seems to the children of a modern age too geocentric, too much dependent on history, too merely human. To the adherents of the older form, the newer one seems to attach too much importance to civilisation and earthly wellbeing; its disciples appear to be too optimistic, too subjective. This antithesis must be overcome, if religion is to gain its full power to fulfil its mission. Today it has especially to accentuate the fundamental movements and facts, to assign the second place to history, to be simple and comprehensible for all,—to exert a more active influence on all the conditions of life,—to bewail the wickedness of the world, but to devote all its strength to improve it. As Plotinus

says: "If we do not struggle, evil will be victorious." It is the task of religion and ethics combined rightly to develop the mutual relations of the superhistorical and the historical,—fully to recognise the eternal, but to leave the execution of the great tasks to historical conditions. It is here necessary both to separate and unite the fundamental problems and those pertaining to our particular time,—to acknowledge impartially both stability and movement. Let us always be aware that we live in a peculiar world of growth and conflict that makes our task imperfect and difficult, but also gives it an incomparable value.

If we resume in a few words the result of our investigation, we shall find that grave spiritual distress runs through mankind today, and that life has lost its inner balance. It is passionately impelled in one special direction, which cannot satisfy it, but which it is not able to resist. Imperative questions of life remain undecided, the efforts bestowed on them feeble and superficial. We based the experience of all mankind on an urgent demand for three main decisions: 1. the acknowledgement of an independent spiritual world, 2. the acknowledgement of a deep schism in life and the universe, 3. the acknowledgement of a real deliverance and change by means of a superior power. All this taken together helps us to find our bearings and to see where the main path leads to. But on all decisive points the main current of thought today fails. It separates life into different isolated threads and refuses to acknowledge an independent spirituality. It is ready to acknowledge the dark and evil as proved by experience; but it rebels against the theoretical appreciation and treatment of a deep schism which might shake man out of his slackness and ensure his progress. He seeks and thinks out all sorts of little remedies against unmistakable evils, but as he sets his hopes on merely human opinions and institutions, it is a far cry to the real evils and the proposed remedies, which are mostly makeshifts and therefore rather conceal than relieve the tension of the situation.

It is quite comprehensible that through such inner failure the movement we have described should constantly gain ground, although it is too narrow and onesided. With a demoniac logical power it opposes indefatigably the best designs of men, in order to degrade and even destroy the structure we call civilisation. In this process the isolated phenomena become links in an unbroken chain, from which not one can be removed. The movement began with the rise of the technical mastery of natural forces. This resulted in industry. Soon industry made itself the supreme master of the material world. It could not advance without an accumulation of the masses. Of course this accumulation imperatively claimed the leadership, and left its stamp on the whole of life. Not fearing class conflicts, this accumulation of the masses could not but seek to subordinate unconditionally the structure of life in the community to the mental capacity and to the interest of one special class. Many changes then became unavoidable, which had so far seemed to be losses: the loss of a historical tradition,—of a national character,—of the independence of individuals and of spiritual personality,—of inner freedom and a self-poised inner life. One of these losses seems always to proceed inevitably from another. At the same time we cannot for a moment doubt that this path leads to ruin.

The hope of a change, which cannot however satisfy the majority of those concerned is simply that this movement is only one section of a vaster and higher life of mankind. This life contains other forces, which are arrested and dim, but which if placed on new ground will finally triumph over all obstacles and take up the struggle against all that tended to make life narrow and shallow. We can see how fully such a movement is justified, but we must be on our guard against a tendency which sacrifices every aspiration to its own standards and interests. Isolated suggestions and proposals avail little to satisfy the inner needs of the whole community. A movement from the whole to the whole must take place—a rousing-up of the he soul, a reconstruction of civilisation, a spiritual reformation. Life must go back to its depths, must fill them with vitalising power while adapting itself to the requirements of the time. We must fight for the soul, not only for the soul of the individual, but for the soul of mankind.

Such an enterprise requires us to acknowledge the presence of superior forces, which alone can raise, unite, and purify us by means of ideas and personalities. Incisive consequences and demands for the structure of life must result and must take the lead. Such a consequence and demand is the demand for the ethical control and critical appreciation of industry. We will abide by the good old German saying: "Man is more than his work."

(Translated by Dora Janke.)

# Roman Law in Germany.

By

TH. VON DER PFORDTEN

Judge at the highest court of Bavaria at Munich.

ROMAN LAW has become invalid in Germany since January 1th, 1900, but the after-effects of its century long validity still continue. And these after-effects chiefly contribute to the fact that law and the application of law give little satisfaction in Germany to-day. The attacks come principally from two sides. Socialistic circles reproach the Roman code of law with having furthered Mammonism and Capitalism and having exclusively favoured the so-called propertied classes and having showed no consideration for the less affluent and economically weak. On the other hand, the Nationalistic circles mainly reject it as the product of an alien spirit, asserting besides that it has assisted the international haute finance in the exploitation of Germany, an idea which had already found expression in the anti-semitic movement of the nineties. In these views the true and the false are intermingled, and it is perhaps just the right time to examine them, in order to ascertain to what extent they are justified.

He who has not had a legal training, can to-day easily form a false conception as to the extent to which the Roman code was formerly valid in Germany. It never attained to a complete domination, Germanic legal codes have frequently maintained themselves side by side with it or have encroached on it. As regards the laws relating to the rights of families and the rights of inheritance, above all as regards the laws relating to real estate and the rights of neighbours and similar matters, the Roman code was far less efficacious than has generally been assumed. The code of civil law also exhibits many component parts based on the Germanic code. On the other hand the Roman code has strongly influenced the general legal mode of thought, the formation of ideas and systems, and still continues to do so. One might say, it has laid itself like a uniform layer between and over the residue of the Germanic code. It is just in this manner that its effects are injurious — so some of its opponents will maintain — it has ossified the legal brain, degraded the judge to a lifeless automaton, and has caused the law to become anti-national and non-social. That also cannot be admitted unreservedly.

Roman law was by no means so hair-splitting and desirous of ideas; it knew very well the necessary exceptions to the fixed rules and was in many respects most skilfully adapted to the requirements of life. The Roman jurists were practical, adroit individuals, and understood very well how to carry out social ideas, without on that account abandoning the magnificent compactness of their system of jurisprudence. The history of the development of the Roman code exhibits phenomena which can be regarded as typical, and which one vainly endeavours to imitate to-day. A flexible law of procedure enabled the pretors to fashion and remodel the unwieldy old laws in a most ingenious manner, even in part to thrust them aside. The further development of the law, as embodied in the verdict, which is to-day commended as the height of wisdom, was once realised in Rome.

The exaggerated rigidity of ideas, with its dread of the teleological formation of thought, which made itself felt in the two first thirds of the 19th Century, was much more an aberration of super-learned German professors than an essential characteristic of that Roman law which had become historical. Ihering, and after him Dernburg, had combated it succesfully, when it again threatened to break in at the time the civil code was being introduced and Roman law abolished. A very natural process! People now had before them the long-wished-for unified code, and thought it must contain well nigh every law in a well-elaborated system; what had been omitted could be extracted from the major propositions by means of a construction of ideas. An implicit belief in the power of the paragraphs was yielded to. And not only the legal man became its victim, but also, and even more so, the layman co-operating in the work of legislation. Especially in the Germany of to-day, the paragraph-fury and the worship of written law celebrate true orgies.

For the expert, it is easy to see that the Roman law — in the form in which it has been handed down to us in the Pandects — renders possible a much more flexible manipulation of the law than a legal code containing a number of subtly thought-out and sharply defined regulations. The Pandects were no collection of polished legal axioms, but were mainly the outcome of individual cases and precedents. It was necessary to proceed inductively in order to achieve the formation of a system. Our modern laws, on the other hand, endeavour to compress into one formula whole mountains of thought, whole worlds of the phenomena of every-day life; they yoke together what it is im-

possible to unite, and it is no wonder that these abstract images no longer fit the profusion of cases that arise, and that when applied, they cause the most serious friction. To give but one example: in connection with the doctrine of errors in the execution of the law, we had in the Pandects a great many cases taken from life, which took into consideration the many-sidedness of events. Now everything is crowded together into one paragraph, the interpretation of which either safeguards its uniform meaning and clashes with the demands of society, or else threatens to become vague and ambiguous if it chooses a broader track.

The harm of the adaption of the Roman code lay much less in the technical legal domain, than in the fact that owing to its alien vesture it rent asunder still more the gulf between the people and the officials, which the transition from simpler to more complex conditions at the close of the Middle Ages had already widened. The springing up of a class of professional judges versed in the law was probably inevitable. But the severance which became inevitable with the division of labour, with the detachment of legislation from the general life of the people, would, without the simultaneous intrusion of the Roman code, perhaps not have led to so profound an antagonism between the jurist, who learnt to feel himself as the administrator of a secret science, inaccessible to the great mass of the people, and the latter, who were unable to understand this peculiar development, to whose consciousness the technical progress connected with it was far less clear than the invasion of an alien intellectual force. A law, in its higher stage of development, will always be to a certain extent unpopular, if only because the general cultural and economic conditions become more complex, so that the individual can no longer quite overlook thein connections. But the threads between the law and the general life of the people would not have snapped so suddenly had the detachment of the science of law and its professional application taken place on the basis of a legal code native to the soil.

This has not been the case, and it is therefore idle to-day to discuss whether it would have been possible at all. This may be doubted, especially when one considers that the German tendency towards particularism and the fostering of tribal idiosyncrasies has always made itself strongly felt, also in the practice of the law. It must be admitted that the joint cultivation of the Roman code by the German legal men maintained, at least in a limited circle, a bond of intellectual unity at a time when the edifice of the German state began to crumble, and that it thus helped to prepare the way for the subsequent uniformity of the law. At the same time one need not be blind to the disadvantages connected with it. They must be taken into account as a reverse to the great advantages which ensued when the Germanic peoples — as in Religion and Art, so also in law — entered upon the mighty inheritance of the old world. Full of life, vigorous and highly gifted, but immature, they stepped into history and became the pupils of the older declining civilisation. It is always an advantage to have had good teachers, but the pressure of tradition can also hamper the development of the pupil's own powers. It all depends on the extent to which he can assimilate what he has learnt into the essence of his own nature, when he has himself matured. And the German, who is ever too susceptible to alien influences, may have been to some extent lacking in this capacity.

We are to-day endeavouring to get away from the unwholesome separation of the law from the life of the people; we want to bring it again into closer connection with our life as a whole, and not to see in it something existing apart. This cannot be brought about by again breaking off its development and striking out everything that has grown into our legal code since the Middle Ages. The great and in many respects magnificently thought-out world of ideas of the Roman code, in which whole generations of legal men have been schooled, cannot without more ado be eradicated. We should in this way only increase the confusion into which we have already fallen since the Revolution. The hasty attempts since 1918 to realise social and supposed social ideas in the law, have produced few encouraging results. We have been inundated by a flood of paragraphs in which hardly the jurist, far less the non-jurist, can find his way, which has converted the law still more into a secret science, hardly mastered even by professional experts. If we were now precipitately to shake the foundations of our civil code, the only thing that is stable and lucid, the teaching of the law and the administration of justice would soon be at a stand-still.

We must at last take seriously the simple and already so often uttered thought, that much less depends on the laws and institutions than on the personalities who carry them out. What we need is a highly cultured legal class, imbued with a true philosophical spirit and a clear insight into the requirements of life. And such a class will always require historical schooling by means of the wisdom stored up in the Roman code. The deficiencies which have manifested themselves in our application of the law, and have undoubtedly also led to a failure of the state administration as

regards to the unusual requirements of the present day, are only a proof that Germany has long been without an efficient governing class. Such deficiencies would have arisen just as well without the Roman code as with it. They are based on the absolutely inadequate preparatory training, which lacked a firm intellectual centre; on the incoherency of our fundamental ideas; on the excessive emphasis of the professional as opposed to the human aspect; on the inadequate development of the will in favour of a one-sided exercise of the faculties of thought and perception; and last but not least, on the weak indulgence extended to the feeble and inefficient. The Roman jurists — who with all their keenness of intellect were men of action — would never have adhered so exclusively to the domain of pure ideas as many a German, whose power of action, even as a schoolboy, was paralysed by a course of instruction confined merely to mechanical learning.

We cannot remedy the evil now by creating laws compelling officials to retire at a certain age, by placing mechanically selected laymen in legal and administrative positions, or by giving important posts to politically sound men, that is to say, to men unreservedly devoted to the momentary parliamentary majority for the time being. I think that the Eucken Society, which aims at deepening and co-ordinating of the scattered elements of our intellectual life, is in a better way than our short-sighted politicians, who only regard the success of the moment. The path is long, and the goal is still far away. But it is all the more important that we should not go astray and wander into bypaths, thus overlooking what is really essential, by picking out some scapegoat or other. The Roman code of law is not at fault, if we cause to be so little satisfied with our jurisprudence, but the long existing intellectual and ethical slackness of our leading circles, with their narrow, superficial conception of life.

(Translated by W. A. Kinross.)

# The Spiritual Need of Our Time and the Quest for a Meaning of Life.

By

REV. HANS G. HAACK.

IT has always been a remarkable fact that in seasons of the most pressing outward distress the German mind has awakened to a deep and eager questioning concerning the final intrinsic problems of life. A spiritual need accompanies — and in the case of most thoughtful persons, even supersedes — external trouble. When so many outward pillars of life have fallen, we ask: where is there a secure basis on which to found our life?

In bygone times such a foundation existed. It was as firmly fixed as the Ancients believed our earth to be in the centre of the universe, as immovable as the strong and lofty structure of the cathedrals, which to medieval men offered a sanctuary of calm, devout meditation, undisturbed by doubts or speculations. But now, as Max Weber says "modern science has brought about the disenchantment of the ancient world". The Copernican system destroyed belief in the importance of our planet as the centre of the universe. Man however still retained his exceptional position, until the theory of evolution showed him to be merely a link in the long chain of created beings. Still civilisation remained and the hope that mankind would evolve a higher life by its own power. But a scepticism such as that of Spengler, dreaming of "the decline of the occident" denies all progress, and looks on all civilisations only as parallel phenomena, destined to rise and fade without having any positive and permanent effect upon humanity as a whole. Thus in the general trend of thought in our time, one stone after another has crumbled away from the ancient structure, and Positivism, which discourages all speculation and inquiry into the supernatural, and looks upon social activity as the only gospel, seems to be the last word on the problems of life.

Now in Germany, after the war, the conviction arose that the destructive and unsatisfactory character of this Positivism proves Intellectualism and Individualism to have gone widely astray. It is only natural, that the reaction against these errors of a purely discursive system of thought and a merely superficial empiricism, should at first overshoot the mark and turn to sentiment, expression and transcendentalism without connection and purposely excluding all scientific methods. Expressionism in art, the religious and social movement of men like Barth, Gogarten and Thurneisen, in their open antagonism against all doctrinal theology, especially the extraordinary growth of occultism in Germany, such as Rudolf Steiner's Anthroposophy, are interesting examples of this.

In the face of all these efforts to raise a new edifice, it seems expedient to examine whether any of the stones from the solidly built palaces of former times might still be serviceable. Possibly we may find valuable foundations, which in a new combination would prove sufficiently firm for modern times. In our twofold quest

after the Transcendental, we find in the religious and philosophical systems two culminating points: on the one hand the teachings of Jesus Christ, that is, genuine Christianity; on the other the philosophy of German Idealism, as it appears, with slight differences of detail, in the views of Kant, Fichte and Hegel. A combination of these two fundamental doctrines, including other valuable historical traditions (though not as an exclusivily constructive element in his view of life), is to be found in the philosophy of our spiritual leader Rudolf Eucken; therefore we wish to unite under his name in our attempt to raise a new structure. I now propose to give a brief and succinct exposition of the principles which Christianity and German Idealism offer to our search after a final support.

### 1. The certainty of an independent spiritual life.

Man is not only a mere segment of a natural and social existence, he also has part in a spiritual world, which is superior to time and space; indeed, he is himself a creative supporter of this spiritual life. As Goethe says: "He weaveth the living robe of the Deity". The certainty of this spiritual life is self-evident. It cannot be proved; it is *above reason*. At the same time it is superior to the accident of mere individualistic intuition, it is *transsubjective*. The inadequacy of a purely human civilisation is overcome by the mighty power of an objective reality. This spiritual life is thus absolute. This is how we must understand Fichte's saying: "Real life lives in the unchangeable and is in itself blissful". It is something quite different from all human relations, this world of ideas, of which Plato speaks intuitively, this absolute spirit, which Hegel in vain attempted to define in lengthy deductions, which Jesus means when He says: "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation, for behold, the kingdom of God is within you". Here is a groundwork and an immovably firm basis for our life. An ancient legend tells us of the giant Antaeus, who drew his strength from the earth, and could only be overcome by tearing him away from his mother. Thus the Christian idealist draws his constancy, his superiority and his inward peace from this spiritual world, and can only be severed from it if by his own fault he gives up this home of "the mothers".

### 2. The nature of this spiritual life.

It is characterised firstly by its inwardness. An inner world of beauty and harmony opens before us. Everything happens through love and conviction. We step out of a world of semblance into one of reality. The growth of life proceeds from within. Here we are obliged to deal with the much discussed problem of the masses. It has been rightly said that "it is the nature of the masses to be without quality, without spontaneous movement, only an object". By forming small communities, highly qualified personalities can disintegrate these inferior masses and raise them to human dignity and happiness. Secondly this spiritual life is characterised by its energy. We awake to a world of inward freedom. Here we may apply Fichte's saying: "God is in everything that is done by those who are devoted to and inspired by Him. Wouldst thou look on God, face to face, as He is? Seek him not beyond the clouds. Thou canst find him wherever thou art. Look on the lives of his followers, and thou seest Him. Give thyself to Him, and thou shalt find Him in thy bosom". We become capable of sacrifice and self-devotion. Life is no longer the varied sport of chance, it becomes an immeasurable task.

Finally this spiritual life is determined by union with God or religion. We awake to a world of devout security. It is this certainty of union with God which St. Paul expresses in the words: "For I am persuaded that neither death nor life shall be able to separate us from the love of God", the mystic union, the most sublime instance of which appears in the words of Jesus: "I and the Father are One". The process of life is no longer the work of shortlived and shortsighted human beings, it is governed by a higher power.

This spirituality Rudolf Eucken declares to be fundamental, combative and victorious, the two first epithelts designing its inwardness and energy, the latter its significance as the highest crown on the religious element of the spiritual life.

### 3. What we gain by this spiritual life.

The value of this spiritual life is proved by its dealing with the three most urgent problems of human destiny: suffering, sin and death. Buddhism opposes to *suffering* only the negation of will. The song of Dhammapada says: "Dam up the river of thy powers, put from thee all desire, when the germs of life have vanished, then shalt thou know infinity". The Christian Idealist on the contrary finds in suffering a means of ascension. According to the fine saying of Master Ekkehard, "it is to him the fleetest steed to eternity". He does not mortify the will to live, but accepts suffering as the will of God. For him the meaning of suffering is to evolve the eternal by self sacrifice. *Sin*, the inner conflict, is to the materialist only a matter of heredity. The Christian Idealist feels the responsibility of his sin.

He recognises in himself a part of the spiritual kingdom which is wrestling for his soul. Here we see the deep tragedy of aspiration, and at the same time the gradual conquest of evil by a higher redeeming power. Sin teaches us that the eternal light can only be attained by working our way through clouds and darkness. The only consolation Positivism knows for death, the dissolution of the human body, points to the creative continuance of successive generations. Spiritual life sees in death nothing but the fall of a curtain. Fichte says: "All the fulness of life, order and prosperity that I observe in the world, is only a curtain which hides an infinitely more perfect one, a germ from which this is to develop. My faith steps behind the curtain, it kindles and quickens the germ. It sees nothing definite, but it expects more than it can understand or will ever be able to grasp here below". In this sense death is the return to eternity in the form of a new being. Thus our whole life receives a deep and sublime significance: we are to evolve the infinite out of the finite, and a new joy and courage are the fruits of this spiritual regeneration.

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We have sought to find a way out of the spiritual need of our time. The community gathered around Rudolf Eucken and anchoring its faith upon Christianity and Idealism appears to me to have clearly perceived the right direction. It behoves us therefore to find pioneers among all nations in order to spread this conviction. May these lines help to promote this aim!

(Translated by Ellen du Bois-Reymond.)

# Reports from our Local Centres.

### Breslau.

THERE has always existed in Germany a deep interest in things spiritual and the war has but increased this two-fold. This spirit was bound to further the study of philosophy, and especially was it that of Rudolf Eucken which added many new friends to its old adherents. That those in Breslau, as in so many other German towns should have joined hands in a working community was due to the initiative of Pastor Haack and Mr. Grollmus. Their first summons "Zur Sammlung der Geister" seemed at first to awaken no great echo, but only a few weeks later numerous sympathizers with Eucken's philosophy gathered round them, and it was possible to found the Breslau Branch. Since then the number of members has been steadily increasing, among them men and women of all ages and belonging to the most dissimilar circles and callings.

The local leaders regard it as their chief task to promote unity and at the same time comprehensiveness of study. To compass this a philosophic problem is selected and for a set time studied, not only in itself, but in its relation to other questions. Thus, during the last 6 winter months, religion formed the "Leitmotiv" of our work. To the consideration of its inward being as also in its relation to culture, morals and nature, one special evening was devoted.

To a previous chain of thought belonged the discussion of the New-Idealistic Movement set on foot by Eucken in its bearings upon other weighty questions, such as Theosophy, Anthroposophy and Socialism, these being treated of in meetings open to the general public, and besides this, a group of members of the Union came together once a week to join in reading works by Eucken.

We consider the chief aim of our work to be bringing into harmony thought and life; we desire to serve not alone intellectual progress, but the elevation of the whole man himself, and hereby to contribute our share to the upbuilding of a better future.

# From all Parts of the Globe.

### The threatened loss of the Church of St. James at Riga.

THERE are actions which serve purposes of utility; there are others in which honour and conscience are at stake. That these are not properly distinguished from one another to-day, that utility frequently forces intrinsic claims far into the background, is mainly due to the unfortunate depreciation of the standard of morals which is so evident at the present time.

The question that we particulary refer to is not well known to every reader of this journal, namely, that the venerable old Church of St. James is to be handed over, contrary to the will of its congregation, to another denomination, the intention being that it shall be robbed from its former proprietor; for, to deprive an individual of a possession long held by him is robbery. That this shall be carried out by an Act of Parliament does not improve the matter, but rather renders it still worse,

because such a procedure betrays a deficiency of moral force in a wide circle of men whose business it is to lead a nation.

St. James's Church is referred to in documents as early as the year 1225. Here, on Advent Sunday, 1522, the Reformer Sylvester Tegetmeyer, of Hamburg, preached his first Protestant sermon; but in 1582 the church was wrenched by violence from the Protestants by the Polish King Stephan Bathory, and it remained in the hands of the Jesuits till the year 1621. However, when Gustavus Adolphus made his entrance into Riga on September 16th, 1621, his first act was to restore St. James's Church to its Lutheran congregation. Since then—that is to say, for over 300 years—St. James's Church has remained an uncontested Protestant possession, and it has been intimately identified with the fate of that venerable town to which Luther himself addressed a vigorous message.

But when the affairs of the church were arranged in the new state of Lettland, a concordat was made on July 19th, 1919, between the Lettic Government and the Vatican, which, inter alia, contains the following stipulation: "A Cathedral Church, which is to be selected by the Government and approved of by the Archbishop, shall be provided for the purpose of the religious worship of the Roman Catholics at Riga." That the Catholic Church should wish to have a firm centre in Riga is explained by the fact that on the creation of the Lettic State the territory bearing the name of Lettgallen, and which for the greater part is Catholic, was united to Lettland. Otherwise Lettland is predominantly Protestant. In Riga itself, according to the last Census, taken on June 15th, 1920, there were 125,439 Lutherans and only 16,422 Catholics. Notwithstanding this, as regards Lettland the Catholics are not to be blamed for wishing to be represented in a dignified manner in the capital of the country. But, naturally, this ought not to have been effected at the expense and to the disadvantage of the Protestant Church and by an act of robbery,—a fact that will be recognised by every unprejudiced Catholic.

But now it has been decided by the Lettic Diet, at the instigation of a member who is also a Catholic priest, to hand over the Protestant Church of St. James to the Catholics. This remarkable measure has actually been passed by the majority of the Diet (four-fifths of the members of which are Protestants), the majority being a considerable one (53 votes against 21). Political and legislative reasons of a tactical nature must have played an active part in this, in order to carry such an incomprehensible and unprincipled resolution! Indeed, it is probably unparalleled in the History of the Church.

Naturally, every consciencious person will consider it to be beneath his dignity to discuss such a proposition; therefore, we will not waste words on it, but merely remark as shortly as possible that grave legal doubts exist concerning the resolution passed by the Diet. But, in order to obviate any eventual difference of opinion arising as to the actual state of affairs, it must be added that there is no question here of a national quarrel, for as a matter of fact the leaders of the Lettic and the German Churches are in perfect unanimity in respect to one another. The question is not of a national but of a religious and ethical description; this resolution is nothing less than an act of political jobbery. But is it fully realised what effect this resolution will have all over the world?

First of all, it will have a depressing influence upon the Protestant population of Riga; indeed, it will even have an embittering effect; for, how many personal impressions, experiences, sacred functions, are associated with such an ancient, venerable House of God! And should all such recollections and associations be obliterated now through the arbitrary decision of a chance majority?! A scission between the population of that town would in that case be inevitable. But we must not think of Riga alone, but of the entire civilised world! Most particularly of the Protestant countries, of Scandinavia, of Germany, of England, of North America; all of these will feel and indignantly repudiate the surrender of such an old church, as being an act of treason against their own convictions. It is certain that they will give vent to their indignation in no measured terms. Is it possible that a newly created aspiring State can already be indifferent as to the manner in which its actions will be judged? And has not every member of the Diet put this question to himself as to whether such behaviour does not compromise and discredit his contry in the most serious manner? Surely it is exactly a democratic nation that should refrain from treating such a question lightly; there are events that leave an indelible stain behind them, and which degrade the nation concerned in the estimation of the whole world.

Thus we earnestly hope that in the very interests of Lettland itself this fatal resolution will be rescinded. The Lettic an Constitution provides the possibility of a Referendum; let us trust that the fullest advantage will be taken of this possibility, and that the plebiscite will decide in favour of right and morality! The civilised world awaits this decision with anxious tension.

## The moral responsibility of the American Press.

NEVER has a heavier responsibility rested on the Press than at the present moment; never has it had a worthier task to perform than now. A world-wide and terrible war lies immediately behind us; formerly peace followed war but now war seems unable to come to an end and continues to torment the civilised world and to allow it no rest. The central point however of all the confusion and complication is the strained relationship between France and Germany; if French Imperialism could only be put on one side, the position would be incomparably better. Certainly France has sustained very severe losses in the course of the long war, and large tracts of its fertile country have been devastated; but it must be remembered that Germany has also suffered terribly by reason of the appalling food-blockade—perhaps even more so in proportion than France.

It is becoming known by degrees to what a shocking extent the general standard of health in Germany has suffered owing to the universal lack of proper nourishment, and the reports which are sent in from all directions by our medical men with reference to this make melancholy reading. As soon as peace was concluded Germany set eagerly to work to try to repair the damage which France had sustained and German workmen stood ready to erect dwellings and to build new houses; but the French incessantly put difficulties in the way, were clearly opposed to any friendly understanding, were desirous of increasing their own power and wished to keep the wound open and to oppress Germany to the utmost degree. During all the succeeding years Germany has suffered greatly, fresh demands poured in, the occupation of the left bank of the Rhine imposed an incredible expenditure on Germany, the never-ceasing claims of France were the principal cause of the devaluation of the German rate of exchange, and thus general prosperity and well-being gradually disappeared until at last it was only certain individuals of a questionable class who could maintain themselves in affluence amid the universal ruin.

Saddest of all is the destruction and disappearance of the German middle-class; for whom it becomes more and more difficult to make a living; and who are oppressed by the deepest anxiety and want. Most of the students are quite unable to support themselves without performing heavy manual labour which naturally has a most injurious effect upon their mental powers. The necessary means and material for the purpose of instruction are wanting both in the schools and universities. In one word, the whole German culture threatens to collapse for want of indispensable means and material. This was the condition of Germany at the beginning of this year, — and it was desperate enough; it has however been still further aggravated by the incursion of the French troops into the Ruhr district on January 15th and the situation has now become acute. How bad things are is best shown by the fact that several of the neighbouring nations — Switzerland, Holland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland, who are quite independent of the political situation, have received a large number of children from the Ruhr district out of compassion in order that these unfortunate beings may escape the inevitable privation and distress. What is still more intolerable is the fact that the French authorities demand from the German officials and workmen unconditional obedience to their orders which is contrary to international law. High German officials as well as ordinary German workmen are now being dragged before the French military courts and are being sentenced to severe punishments. The number of those unfortunates who are being driven out of hearth and home is increasing daily, and distress is spreading far and wide over the land.

One could not have believed it possible that such barbarities could have been perpetrated and maintained in all their severity and cruelty in the middle of Europe. A cry of anger arises from nearly all the nations, and the moral denunciation of such conduct is beyond all doubt. The whole of the civilised world displays its sympathy, but this violent and unjust behaviour on the part of the French authorities can only be checked when the entire civilised world raises the strongest protest and denounces such behaviour as a disgrace to mankind. We are sorry to have to admit that the disposition of the North American Press towards this grave state of affairs is inclined to vacillate; strong denunciation of such inhumanity is not wanting but at the same time one cannot fail to be aware of a certain amount of dull acquiescence in the injustice. In this matter a grave responsibility lies at the door of American public opinion which finds its expression in the Press. America decided how the World-War should end, and without its intervention Germany would not have collapsed. America cannot escape the responsibility of assuming a clear and welldefined attitude towards the evil deeds which are taking place on the Ruhr. There is nothing of a complicated nature in this attempt to enslave a highly-cultured and industrious population, but it is simply a matter of ordinary humanity and common justice. Whatever claims the French may have against the Germans, they must not try to enforce them in this barbarous manner. The more importance

America attaches to justice and personal freedom and the more she values these attributes, so much the more must she repudiate such injustice. Doubt is only possible where reliable information as to the situation is wanting; to spread this correct information and to make it tell even in the most remote circles is not only the political but the moral and even the sacred duty of the American Press. The American Press can cast the straw into the balance which will determine how this burning question, which exercises the whole civilised world at the present moment, is to be settled. Where so much is at stake, a clear and well-weighed answer should be given. We can only hope that the American Press will be fully conscious of the great responsibility which rests upon it, and will always keep in sight that it is not a matter of expediency but of flagrant moral injustice. At this juncture all well-intentioned men must march side by side and oppose what is evil with iron determination. To hold back and to show indifference can, under these circumstances, become almost a crime. When Cain murdered his brother Abel he justified the murder to God with the words: "Am I my brother's keeper?" We are convinced that the American Press will not take this callous view of the sad plight of Germany.

R. Eucken.

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The Australian Monthly Journal **"The Commonweal"** gives a very kind welcome to our Review and heartily wishes great success to the Organ of the Eucken Society. After giving a concise view of our organisation the editor notes:

> **What is the aim of the Society?** The answer, in a general way, must be the somewhat "large order," "The Regeneration of Mankind," in other words, the "order" that Christian Religion sets before us.
>
> Professor Eucken has written many books on this great subject. One of these is, as our readers may remember, **"Can We Still Be Christians?"** a question which, notwithstanding all the "wood, hay and stubble" that have gathered round Christian Religion, like seaweed round a noble vessel, he answers in the affirmative. He is a Christian idealist. The magical and miraculous may have to be discarded, but the great spiritual truth remains which was, and is, and ever shall be, the essential. Man is essentially a spiritual being, rising above material and physical nature, and has in himself the witness to affinity with a divine nature, faith in which can alone give him strength and courage to meet the problems of life and fulfil his human destiny. We are citizens of a spiritual world, and must rise to the height of our nature, or perish. The spiritual world —the world of truth, beauty, aspiration, inspiration, creative activity, upward struggle from the brute, from the materialistic and mechanical, freedom, love—is the real human world. The great evil of our time is that we have lost our souls. Our work and our religion have been divorced. Nothing can save mankind but a new religious impulse. To nurse and develop this, and regenerate mankind through an ethical religious revival, is the great object of the Eucken Society. In such revival do its members see the hope of a better day, not only for Germany, but for the whole world.
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> As Carlyle said, the modern world has lost its soul; and as Rabindranath Tagore writes to Professor Eucken— "Philosophy wrongly pursued, religion wrongly practised, and science wrongly applied, have brought upon us continual series of disasters."
>
> Must not the true "Easter" be a Resurrection of the Soul?

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**Alfred Biese:** Wie unterrichtet man Deutsch? (How ought German to be taught?) publ. by Quelle & Meyer, Leipzig 1923. 2nd Ed.

This book is intended more particulary for grammar-school masters, but we can warmly and confidently recommend it to all parents and instructors. To a rich experience of life, great love of the young firm faith in Germany's future, and artistic and philosophic treatment of the subject is added great skill in rendering difficult problems clear and convincing. This experienced investigator and teacher is thoroughly conversant with universal literature and by no means underrates modern works, (which receive due recognition). A thoughtful stimulating book for which one can be truly grateful.

# Our Letter Box.

AN Indian friend has sent a letter from which we quote the following:

> In going through Prof. Eucken's article on "The Rights and Duties of National Defence" I have been most delighted to find that Prof. Eucken holds the same view of passive resistance which has been preached in India by Mr. Gandhi during the recent years. We, Indians, can very well realise the hard conditions under which Germany is now living, as we have also been suffering from the same cause, and we do sincerely hope that a day will come, sooner or later, when soul force will conquer brutal force.
>
> Germany has been the greatest centre of spiritual culture in Europe, and from my little study of her philosophy I find that it is also in the main inspired by the same lofty ideal of Spiritualism (or Idealism) as characterised the ancient Hindu thought. And it is no wonder that it seems to me that it is the great similarity in the bent of mind of the peoples of the two great countries, Germany and India, that has made the people of Germany appreciate most the works of our great poet Tagore in which the ancient Hindu bent of mind and thought finds an exposition in a unique and new way. Again, during my very short stay in Berlin and Leipzig in the last summer I have been greatly impressed

to find some qualities in the German people resemble to a great extent those of ours, and I have always thought that it is in this that we perhaps find the greatest corroboration of a common ancestry.

Miss E. K., Marion, Texas. Many thanks for your appreciative letter. We are glad to hear that the women of America may be prevailed upon to work for understanding the true mission of woman.

# Editorial.

THE Eucken Society, founded in Germany, has published 3 Numbers and one Double-Number of its Eucken-Review and has forwarded them to their English-speaking friends and adherents. The latter have seen by this Review what our Society aims at, and in what spirit it is working. It will continue steadfastly in this direction. We who belong to the Society hope and expect that sympathizers throughout the world will now join us and take up the fight against moral decadence.

In future we will only send the Review to subscribers. To be a subscriber it is not necessary to be a member of the Society. We should be delighted and should consider it of great value if, in course of time, local centres were to be founded outside Germany, to then correspond with the other local centres. In the next number of the Review will be found the exact formulation of our aims. But as above said, subscription to the Review does not necessitate membership. The yearly subscription is 1 Dollar or 4 shillings. In view of the heavy charges for banking in Germany, a note in a registered letter is the best method of payment.

WE regret very much that our English Editor Miss Margaret von Seydewitz is ill and has not been able to go through the English translation of the articles of this issue. We hope that she will be better in a short time and will be able to help us again.

Until then we beg to direct letters to The Eucken Society, 5 Botz Strasse, Jena, Germany.

THE Eucken-Society under the title "The Euckenkreis" edits books written by liberal minded-men well known in the literary and scientific world, on Philosophy, Literature, Pedagogy, Political Economy and Art as well as on subjects of special and timely interest.

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